



HOUSE
BUDGET
COMMITTEE

Budget Digest

Chairman Steve Womack

December 19, 2018

STATUS OF GOVERNMENT FUNDING FOR FISCAL YEAR 2019

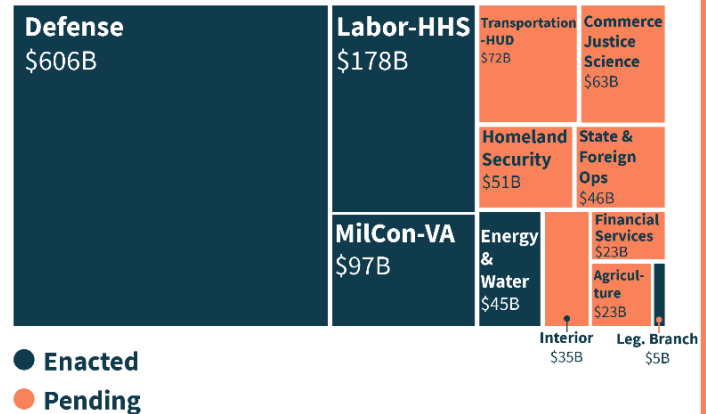
The power of the purse is the most important responsibility granted to Congress by the Constitution. In order to fund the Federal Government, Congress must pass 12 separate appropriations bills before the end of the fiscal year, which begins on October 1.

Consistent with recent practice, there have been delays in the process for considering fiscal year (FY) 2019 appropriations bills. Since the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 does not provide adequate enforcement mechanisms, statutory budget deadlines are often missed. As a result, Congress frequently relies on continuing resolutions (CRs) or omnibuses, creating uncertainty about government spending or raising the threat of a government shutdown. Acknowledging that the current federal budget process is broken, House Budget Committee Chairman Steve Womack and Ranking Member John Yarmuth introduced H.R. 7191, the *Bipartisan Budget and Appropriations Process Reform Act of 2018*. This legislation calls for critical reforms that will begin to improve the federal funding process to ensure Congress completes its budget work on time.

Status of Government Funding. To date and prior to the start of FY 2019, five appropriations bills were signed into law. The first three of the 12 regular appropriations bills were considered as a “minibus” package, H.R. 5895, which included Energy and Water, Legislative Branch, and Military Construction-Veterans Affairs FY 2019 appropriations. In September, Congress enacted H.R. 6157, legislation which included the Labor-HHS and Defense appropriations bills. H.R. 6157 also included a short-term CR to fund the remainder of the government through December 7, 2018. On that day, a subsequent CR was signed into law providing funding through December 21, 2018.

Funding Levels. The *Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018* sets a cap on most discretionary budget authority equivalent to \$1.244 trillion in FY 2019. This limit is divided between a \$647 billion cap on defense discretionary spending and a \$597 billion cap on non-defense discretionary spending.

Status of FY19 Appropriations



The five enacted appropriations bills provide \$931 billion, or approximately 75 percent, of spending subject to these limits, leaving \$313 billion, or approximately 25 percent, available for the seven remaining bills. Enacted appropriations also include \$69 billion for Global War on Terrorism funding and \$2 billion for program integrity spending. This funding is not subject to the spending limits established by the *Budget Control Act of 2011*, as amended by the *Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018*.

Next Steps. There are several actions Congress may take before the current CR expires on December 21:

- Pass the remaining seven bills separately or as a “minibus” package. This would finalize all fiscal year 2019 funding and avoid a government shutdown;
- Pass some of the remaining seven FY 2019 appropriations bills and a CR for the outstanding bill(s) for which Congress and the White House cannot reach an agreement; or
- Pass a CR for all remaining seven bills, either for a short period to allow for continued negotiations or to have the 116th Congress address remaining FY 2019 spending.

In the absence of Congressional action, failing to pass some or all of the remaining bills or a CR would result in a partial government shutdown and would affect only the agencies that have not received FY 2019 funding.